

## BRIEFING NOTES

**NAME OF GROUP:** PLANNING COMMISSION

**DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:** Wednesday, October 28, 2015, 1:50 p.m., Bill Luxford Studio, Room 113, County-City Building, 555 South 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Cathy Beecham, Michael Cornelius, Tracy Corr, Maja Harris, Chris Hove, Jeanelle Lust, Dennis Scheer and Lynn Sunderman; (Ken Weber absent).

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** David Cary, Kellee Van Bruggen and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department.

**STATED PURPOSE** Briefing on **“Bike and Pedestrian Activities”**

Chair Chris Hove called the meeting to order and acknowledged the posting of the Open Meetings Act in the back of the room.

### **BIKE SHARE**

Kellee Van Bruggen stated that the first topic is Bike Share. National experts, including Alison Cohen spoke at a bike share workshop held last year by the Planning Dept. and UNL Student Government. Bike share is expanding across the country. The first generation was in the 1970's in Portland. It was a system of free bikes. There wasn't much accountability, so a lot of the bikes ended up in the river. The second generation was in Copenhagen in the 1980's. This was a coin operated system. A lot of these ended up in the river as well. Paris developed a system around 2007 that operated off credit cards. Cities are embracing bike share due to increased mobility, spontaneous bicycle trips, it complements transit, environmental, social and health benefits and reduced traffic congestion. Bike share is an automated self-service bicycle rental. This is for short, one-way trips. This works off memberships. It works best with a dense network of bike stations that are conveniently located. The new generation of a bike share system uses a smart dock system. Now there is a fourth generation system of bike share that uses a smart bike system. It has a GPS unit, so it can be locked anywhere. The stations can have a solar panel. We received a Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) grant for \$600,000.00. This is an 80/20 program, so the City has to provide \$150,000.00. We currently have commitment from UNL for 3 stations and 3 years of operational costs. We received a grant from Blue Cross Blue Shield for one station and one year of operational cost. Station placement is still being studied. We are finalizing the remaining private funding for local capital match and 2 years of operating funds.

Scheer questioned if these stations will be located on UNL, downtown or both. Van Bruggen replied that UNL is looking at placing bike stations on both of their campuses.

Van Bruggen continued that a mapping exercise was done in September of 2014. A proposed station list was formed and mapped out. Two locations on UNL east campus are being proposed, along with one on Innovation Campus. David Cary stated that ideally we would like a second one on Innovation Campus as well.

Corr understands that UNL paid for three stations. She questioned where they would be located. Cary stated that two would be on the east campus and one downtown, most likely by the student union.

Van Bruggen stated there has been a lot of interest for stations along the Telegraph District.

Beecham could see a station located by the football stadium. She wondered if staff envisions people using these on game day. Van Bruggen replied that we believe something could be worked out. Cary added that if you are successful, the revenue stream expands. Van Bruggen stated that all the bikes have GPS tracking. With that information, we can make location adjustments for stations that might not be performing as well as others.

Corr inquired how hard it is to move the entire station. Van Bruggen replied there are different types of stations. Some are bolted into the ground, some can be moved with three people.

Hove would expect people to travel on the sidewalks. Van Bruggen stated that we would notify everyone of our downtown ordinance and where the bike lanes are. Cary added that we would be very clear that our downtown ordinance prohibits bicycles on sidewalks. We believe that should be retained.

Hove wondered if you were going downtown from Innovation Campus, would you have to ride your bike on the overpass? Cary stated there is a trail system that is available at Innovation Campus and is expected to be used. A trail would get you to downtown.

Cornelius questioned what happens when you get to a station and the bikes are all gone. Van Bruggen replied that there is an app that can alert you to what station has how many bikes left or if there are any open spots. Cary added this is new, so we can take advantage of technology.

Van Bruggen stated that staff is working to finalize the sponsorships and funding. We continue to work with Nebraska Dept. of Roads (NDOR) to move forward with federal funding. We have also been working with the City Attorney's Office on sponsorship agreements. Once we have an agreement from NDOR, we will work on an RFP (Request for Proposal). We anticipate a launch date in late summer of 2016.

Lust inquired what the cost will be to rent a bike. Van Bruggen stated that they aim for a membership of \$60.00 to \$80.00 per year. These bikes are really intended for a trip of 30 minutes or so, short term trips. Cary added that there is another big phase to take on after the initial fundraising efforts. We are going to really start working on memberships.

Beecham wondered how the charge works. If someone steals a bike, who is out the money? Van Bruggen replied that the city will own the bike and the bike is then leased to the rider. The rider is responsible for the condition of the bike.

Lust asked if this is self-funding. Van Bruggen replied that we did some research. We believe \$200,000.00 is a reasonable cost for ongoing operations and maintenance. 30% or \$60,000.00 is estimated to come from membership fees and the rest will be in sponsorship fees.

Hove asked if other cities are self-supporting. Cary replied no. He believes we are having pretty strong success in comparison with other cities. Other systems have been scratching and clawing for sponsors and funding. We have been pretty lucky.

### **COMPLETE STREETS**

Van Bruggen stated that in September, 2013, Mayor Beutler established a policy for complete streets. Many departments come together and discuss policies. Over the last year and a half, some topics that have come forward is Ordinance review. Last year, the committee also looked at skateboards in the downtown. They are currently prohibited. We did a review of other cities around the country. Our committee discussed banning behavior as opposed to an outright ban. We wanted to encompass different types of transportation. We are still waiting on a draft. We have also looked at riding on sidewalks. Bikes are moving at a much faster speed than pedestrians. We are okay with leaving the ban in place. We also looked at the intricacies of a bicyclist in a crosswalk.

Cary stated that there is a difference between a pedestrian and a bicyclist. A bicyclist still on a bike doesn't have the same status as a pedestrian, per current law.

Scheer questioned if that refers to bikes in a crosswalk area or just at the intersection. Cary replied that if you are on the street, you have the same rights as any vehicle.

Cornelius sees that this is a complicated issue. Cary stated this is why we have Lincoln Police Dept. and the City Attorney as part of discussions.

Cornelius wondered who is pushing for this change. Cary replied it is a lot of the bike advocacy groups. He believes most bike people believe it is better to be in the streets. Then there are people who don't feel safe in the streets.

Beecham has kids who bike to school. She agrees that this sounds like a complicated issue.

Van Bruggen continued that another topic for discussion has been bike parking. The committee also reviews projects such as the StarTran Transit Development Plan and Bike Share, along with the N Street Cycle Track and Public Works projects. We have \$50,000.00 annually designated for Complete Streets. A Gap Analysis map was created for bus routes, bike parking, trails, etc. This has been a helpful tool for project selection. The group has selected the first two years of projects. This includes three sidewalk connections to trails for \$87,000.00; bike route signage along priority routes for \$10,000.00; and \$3,000.00 for bike parking. A lot of the bike signs are already installed.

Corr wondered about the term "toy vehicles". Van Bruggen stated that there was not very clear direction as to what that consisted of. The term is very vague and a difficult term, so that needs to be removed.

Beecham inquired about renting helmets for bike share. Van Bruggen stated that the committee briefly kicked around the idea, but they believe that is a separate issue. Cary added that a discussion may occur about providing reusable helmets with the bike share program.

### **N STREET CYCLE TRACK**

Van Bruggen stated that the N Street Cycle Track is an exclusive bike facility that combines the experience of a separate path with the on-street infrastructure of a conventional bike lane. This came about as a "last mile connection" identified in the Downtown Master Plan update in 2012. This was coordinated with other projects such as the Block 68 redevelopment, the former Baker Hardware site and 21<sup>st</sup> and N Street. We are trying to work on education with people. One of those issues is motor vehicle parking along the facility. This will be included in a PSA.

Another new feature is bike signals. The contractors are working on coordinating the signals as we speak. Cary stated this is where a lot of the cost came for the project in the signalization.

Van Bruggen continued there are also two stage turn boxes. Cary believes there are bike sensors on the road to help with the signaling.

Scheer understands there could potentially be bikes on the streets and bikes in the bike lane. Cary stated that he was correct. Bikes are allowed on the street, this does not change that.

Van Bruggen continued with a virtual tour of N Street. From Canopy to 9<sup>th</sup> Street has an extended crosswalk. 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> St. will affect all the traffic signals at the intersections. 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> St. is where the bulk of the work is being done. On 13<sup>th</sup> St. there is a median being worked on. 13<sup>th</sup> St. to Centennial Mall is the heart of the downtown. There will be some really nice aesthetics. There will be an extended median that provides good space for a turn box. Centennial Mall to 17<sup>th</sup> St and 17<sup>th</sup> to Antelope Valley Parkway will be marked. Antelope Valley to 21<sup>st</sup> St., and 21<sup>st</sup> and N St. intersection will be mostly marked with paint. We have been working on public education. We are planning on having two PSA's. We are putting together a two to three minute educational video.

Cornelius wondered how you get the video in front of people. Van Bruggen stated this will done in various ways. We also have a flyer that is available. Beecham thinks advertising in movie theatres is a great vehicle. Harris wondered about advertising on the cube. Van Bruggen thinks there are a lot of questions regarding how these bike lanes work. She thinks a video will work very well. There will be an N Street Celebration in the spring after the facility opens initially this fall.

Corr inquired if the bike lanes will be plowed like the streets. Van Bruggen stated yes. There will be coordination on the clearing of these. Cary added that Downtown Lincoln Association has been briefed on these as well.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.